



INDUSTRIAL WORKER

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Union Busting 101

A few days ago, a friend passed on to me a brochure from some place called Executive Enterprises, Inc., entitled "The AFL-CIO's 'Union Yes' Campaign." The brochure advertised a course for business managers that, for a mere \$695, teaches business "how to stay union-free when confronted with new, sophisticated, high tech organizing techniques."

Since I had heard of these professional union-busting outfits before, I was interested enough to glance through the agenda for the two-day seminar. I am passing on the best parts, along with my thoughts about what Executive Enterprises really meant to say but couldn't.

On the first day, prospective union-busters take on the topic "Why the Labor Movement Believes the Time is Right for Organizing—And What to Do About It." Why workers would want to organize? Easy question—low wages, unsafe conditions, being treated like dirt, etc. Executive Enterprises instead talks about things like "Quality of work life and the needs of today's younger workforce," and "Employee involvement and participation programs and how unions view them."

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Working at the L-P Mill

by Judi Bari

"I've worked in the sawmill for 13 years, and every year the logs get smaller. Everyone knows Louisiana-Pacific is leaving. It's just a matter of time." A Ukiah L-P millworker told me that last spring. Since that time L-P has laid off over one-third of its workforce in our area. They have closed or are closing their mills in Potter Valley, Covelo, Cloverdale and Calpella, and they have laid off the graveyard shift in Ukiah. Meanwhile, they have opened up their redwood planing operation in Mexico, using machinery that they took out of the Potter Valley mill. Yet despite all this, we have not heard a peep of complaint from the L-P workers. How does a company as cold and crass as Sleaziana Pacific keep their workforce so obedient? A look behind the barbed wire fence that surrounds their Ukiah mill might yield some clues.

"It's their little world, and when you step through the gate you do what they say or you don't stay in their little world," says one millworker. The work

rules are designed to turn you into an automaton. There's a two-minute warning whistle, then the start-up whistle. You have to be at your work station ready to go when the start-up whistle blows, or you can be written up for lateness (three white slips in a year for the same offense and you're fired). You stay at your work station doing the same repetitive job over and over for 2 or 2½ hours (2 hours in the planing mill, 2½ hours in the sawmill) until the break whistle blows. Then you get a 10-minute break, except that it takes you 2 minutes to walk to the break room and 2 minutes to walk back, so you only get to sit down for 6 minutes. And don't get too comfortable, because there's a 2-minute warning whistle before the end of breaktime, then you have to be back at your station ready to go when the start-up whistle blows again. If you ever wondered what they were training you for with all those bells in public school, here's the answer—life at L-P.

In the Land of the Free, democracy stops at the plant gates. The Bill of Rights is supposed to protect against

unreasonable or warrantless searches. But not at L-P. Their drug policy reads like the gestapo: "Entry onto company property will be deemed as consent to inspection of person, vehicle, lockers or other personal effects at any time at the discretion of management. Employee refusal to cooperate in alcohol and other drug testing, or searches of other personal belongings and lockers are subject to termination." [sic] And, before you even get hired you have to submit to a urine test and sign a consent form to let them test your urine any time "for cause," again at the discretion of management.

Amid constant noise and visible sawdust in the air, millworkers do jobs that would shock people who are unfamiliar with factory work. Take the job of off-bearer. As whole logs come into the mill they are stripped of their bark, then run through 9-foot-tall band saws to make the first rough cut. The off-bearer stands a few feet from these saws and uses a hook to grab the slices of log and set them up for the edgerman. There are no guards on the saw blades, just exposed

high speed, spinning teeth. The off-bearer must wear a face shield to protect himself from flying knots or metal debris from the logs, but that's not always enough to prevent injury. "It's even worse," says one experienced off-bearer, "because the knots are few and far between, so you're not on the alert. It can run cool for a week or a month, then wham!—something pulls the saw off."

This is what happened in the famous tree-spike case at the Cloverdale mill, when the band saw hit a metal spike and broke. Saw blade fragments went flying, and a 12-foot piece hit off-bearer George Alexander in the face, cutting right through his face guard and nearly decapitating him. "The saw hit me flat," Alexander told news reporters. "If it had hit me with the teeth I'd be dead. I'm only here because my friend held my veins together before the ambulance came." The sawblades severed his jugular veins, cut his face, broke his jaw in 5 places, and knocked out a dozen teeth. That's why Northern California Earth First! renounced tree-spiking, and that's

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Letters to the Editors . . .

Dear Wobblies:

The Green Party and Labor Party advocates all favor direct action, so why do you find it necessary to attack their interest in electoral politics? Greens know elections in and of themselves won't change much, but it should be abundantly clear that direct action by itself doesn't get it done either. (The Gulf War is the latest example.)

As to why the Greens and not Peace and Freedom: the Greens are an international movement with political parties in 55 countries (including Canada and Mexico) on every continent, and in several of the United States. Peace and Freedom is a moribund New Left California holdover with virtually no grassroots activism, while the Greens are the fastest growing grassroots organization in California.

Jess' point that Greens tend to deny their left heritage in favor of adopting the viewpoint of indigenous cultures is well-taken. We do draw our inspiration, philosophy and science from indigenous peoples, and I for one make no apologies, as long as we give them credit for it! We don't reject the spirit and the heroism of our left antecedents, only their anti-ecological solutions.

Wobblies, please keep up the good organizing work—we both agree that education, organization and action are what it's all about. But don't criticize

those who enter the electoral arena—it's a vital part of the struggle.

Yours for the Earth,
David Spero
Editor, *Green Consensus*

Dear IW:

The question of working class political action raised by the prospects of a U.S. Labor Party offers us a chance to examine just what we mean when we say "political action."

One form of political action consists of lobbying (as practiced by the AFL-CIO) and running candidates for office (as proposed by the Labor Party advocates). This seems to be the definition of political action Jeff Miller of the New Union Party adheres to. This is called state politics. FW Miller correctly notes the political action of the state in crushing strikes among railroad workers and packing house workers, yet he seems to miss the point that for workers the most effective political action is the strike, which is political action controlled directly by workers. There is nothing more political, from a working class standpoint, than a truly militant strike. Such strikes transcend economism and address the real issues of class conflict and power. Mass direct action of this kind is far more useful to the working class than

playing parliamentary games. For syndicalists and anarcho-syndicalists there is no question of "political action" versus "economic action." Every action we take, every struggle we join, becomes political in that we are seeking to change the nature of society and convince people that this is a good idea. Direct action is political action. Parliamentary action subjects us to abuse and co-optation. It is a waste of our energy and sends a mixed message to our fellow workers. The future of the working class is in the hands of working people, not in elected officials and parliamentary campaigns.

We aren't proposing to build a new world based on a modified version of the old one, with the names changed but the roles essentially the same. We are proposing to create a world run by the direct participation of people in the workplace (a workplace so drastically changed that it would not be recognized as such by contemporary standards) and the community at large. This cannot be achieved by gradualist methods such as parliamentary action. It requires more dynamic efforts, namely the general strike and insurrection, which will be controlled by working people in the streets and not by politicians in the halls of power.

Mike Kolhoff
I.U. 620

Dear Industrial Worker:

Greetings from the New York chapter of the Anarchist Youth Federation! We are writing to your editorial group because, to our knowledge, our political outlooks are similar (anarchist/anti-authoritarian/autonomist), and we are interested in establishing communication so that in the future we might exchange ideas, literature and solidarity.

But first, for those of you who know nothing about the AYF, here's a brief history. The AYF grew out of the youth workshop at the 1989 Anarchist gathering in San Francisco. There seemed to be much interest in creating some sort of radical youth network, and the founding Minneapolis chapter was quickly joined by those in New York and the Mid-South (now defunct). In the past two years, the Federation has grown tremendously. The structure of the network is based around autonomous affiliate groups, united under the AYF name and statement of beliefs in the interest of promoting anti-authoritarian resistance among youth (how locals choose to interpret those beliefs, or what course of action they choose to take, is entirely up to them). There are now around 20 official affiliate groups in three countries, and many more unofficial groups and individuals working under the AYF name. Because AYFers are united around a basic statement of ideals, and not official "membership" status, it would be hard to estimate our numbers. Realistically, they lie between about 500 and 1,000 people.

Besides the work local groups do (which includes such activities as litera-

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North America's Only Radical Labor Newsmagazine

INDUSTRIAL WORKER



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IWW DIRECTORY

For those unfamiliar with IWW terminology, we offer these definitions: Job Shop—an IWW-organized group of workers at a particular workplace—either worker-owned, or owned by the bosses. GMB—General Membership Branch, a chartered branch of members linked by locale, rather than workplace. IWW Group—a group of IWW members in the same locale, not large enough to be a GMB. I.U.—Industrial Union, the IWW number assigned to a particular industry. DElegate—an IWW member authorized to collect dues and to sign up new members.

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney Area IWW Group—Delegate: Ray Elbourne, Cnr Dittons Lane and Old Illawarra Hwy, Sutton Forest 2577, (048) 682883
Jura Books—110 Chrystal St. Petersham, Sydney

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver GMB—110-511 Gatersbury St., Coquitlam, V3J 5E7, (604) 936-1927. John Barker, contact.

Eastside Datagraphics Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1460 Commercial Drive, Vancouver V5L 3X9, (604) 255-9559.

SE British Columbia IWW Group—P.O. Box 54, Balfour, V0G 1C0. Contact: David Everest (604) 229-4978.

MANITOBA

Winnipeg IWW Group—B. Mackay, P.O. Box 3204, GNPO, R3C 4E7.

ONTARIO

Kingston IWW Group—472 Albert Street, K7L 3W3, (613) 544-2382. Delegate: Brad Waugh (613) 549-6094.

Ottawa IWW Group—388 1/2 Kent Street, K2P 2A9, (613) 231-2922.

Toronto Group—11 Andrews Avenue, M6J 1S2, (416) 941-9945. Meetings first Thursday, 7 pm, each month, phone for location.

Blackbird Design Collective Job Shop (I.U. 450)—394 Euclid Ave., Suite 301, Toronto M6G 2S9, (416) 972-6293.

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND

IWW Delegate—D. Czunys, 13 Wolsley, York, YO1 5BQ.

IWW Delegate—F. Lee, 22 Vicarage Lane, Belgrave, Leicester, LE4 5 PD, Phone: 0533-661835

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ARKANSAS

IWW Delegate—P.O. Box 1403, Conway 72032.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles contact—Dorice McDaniels, (310) 679-2570.

IWW Local 1/Mendocino/Humboldt GMB—Delegates: Judi Bari, P.O. Box 656, Willits, 95490. message phone: (707) 468-1660.

Riverside Group—Delegate: Kathy Light (714) 369-9799.

San Diego IWW—RMR Kroopkin, 2675 Fletcher Parkway #211, El Cajon 92020, (619) 460-2907.

San Francisco Bay Area GMB—1095 Market St., #204, 94103 (415) 863-WOBS.

Berkeley Recycling Center Job Shop (I.U. 670)—M. Carlstroem, 2515 Piedmont #8, 94607.

ASUC Recyclers at UC Berkeley, 620 Eshleman, 94720. Delegates: Kiri Soares and Karen Burnes (510) 642-4895.

New Earth Press Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1640 Addison, Berkeley, 94702. Delegate: Dave Karoly (510) 658-5377

Typesetting Etc. Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1095 Market St. #210, SF CA 94103 (415) 626-2160.

Santa Barbara Area IWW—S. Menard, (805) 968-8456.

COLORADO

Denver/Boulder GMB—2412 E. Colfax, Denver 80206, (303) 388-1065. Office open Saturdays 9-12. Meetings, second Friday each month, 7 p.m. Delegates: Cliff Sundstrom, 910 E. 8th Ave. #202, Denver 80218. (313) 832-7602. Dave Frazer, Box 6, Rollinsville 80474. (303) 258-3732. P&L Printing Job Shop (I.U. 450), 2298 Clay, Denver 80211, (303) 433-1852.

FLORIDA

Miami Area IWW Group, P.O. Box 1856, Miami Beach, 33119, (305) 534-7175. Delegate: I. Lewis.

GEORGIA

Atlanta IWW Group—340 Elmira Place, 30307. (404) 524-1243.

HAWAII

Honolulu Area IWW Group (808) 732-7027 Delegate: D. Goldsmith

IDAHO

Boise IWW Group—Delegate: W. Cohan, 2701 N. 29th St., 83703, (208) 343-1699.

ILLINOIS

Chicago GMB—(New World Resource Center) 1476 W. Irving Park, 60613 (312) 549-5045. Meetings, first Friday 7:30 pm, Labor Video Forums, third Friday 7:30 pm.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans Area IWW Group—R. McCarthy, P.O. Box 15734, 70175-5734, (504) 899-0014.

MAINE

Lewiston IWW Group—Contact: M. Lunt (207) 786-6273.

MARYLAND

Baltimore Area GMB—R. Bey, Black Shield, Box 1681, Glen Burnie 21060, (301) 367-3024.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston GMB—Box 454, Cambridge 02139, (617) 629-2922. Meetings, second Sunday, 2 pm. Delegates: Nora Smith, Dani Mavronicles.

MICHIGAN

SE Michigan GMB—Albert Parsons (313) 769-0695 and Michael Kozura, 7252 Kendal, Dearborn, MI 48126, (313) 581-2065.

Ann Arbor Tenants' Union Job Shop (I.U. 670)—4001 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor 48109, (313) 763-6876. Delegate: Jeff Gearhart (313) 994-5477.

People's Warehouse Branch (I.U. 660)—727 W. Ellsworth, Ann Arbor 48108, (313) 769-8629. Delegates: Carol Landry, Mark Kaufmann (313) 483-3478.

N. Michigan—John Patterson P.O. Box 245, Conway 49722-0245.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis / St. Paul IWW Group—Box 2391, Loop Str., 55402, (612) 339-5002. Delegate: Chris Shillock.

Duluth Area IWW Group—1514 N. 8th Ave. E., Duluth 55805. Delegate: Jack Rosenquist.

MISSISSIPPI

Gulfport IWW Group—Contact: C.G. Streuly (601) 896-3515.

MONTANA

IWW Contact: Mark Ross, 111 W. Quartz, Butte, 59701.

NEVADA

Tahoe Area IWW—Larry Steinberg, P.O. Box 1114, Dayton 89403, (702) 246-3120.

NEW YORK

New York GMB—P.O. Box 1147 M, Bayshore 11706. Delegates: Brian Mahoney (516) 586-2103. Jackie Panish, Box 372, Rego Park 11374, (212) 868-1121. Rochelle Semel, RD 1, Box 158-B, Hartwick, 13348 (607) 293-6489. Bob Young, Box 920, Wingdale 12594.

Socialist Party USA National Office Job Shop (I.U. 670)—516 W. 25th St. #404, NYC 10001. (212) 691-0776.

OHIO

SW Ohio IWW Group—D.E. Slaton, Box 26416, Trotwood, 45426, (513) 854-0051.

PENNSYLVANIA

Lehigh Valley GMB—P.O. Box 4133, Bethlehem 18018, Delegates: Lenny Flank Jr. (215) 759-7982, Mike D'Amore (215) 434-0218, Dennis Good (215) 921-2459.

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VERMONT

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WASHINGTON

Bellingham GMB—P.O. Box 1580, 98227

Tacoma/Olympia GMB & GDC Local 4—2115 S. Sheridan Ave., Tacoma 98405, (206) 272-8119.

Seattle IWW Group—P.O. Box 95686, 98145-2686, (206) 525-1336. Delegate: Wayne Taylor.

Street of Crocodiles Letter Press Job Shop—P.O. Box 20610, Seattle 98102, (206) 726-5924

WISCONSIN

Madison GMB—Box 2605, 53701, (608) 255-1800. Delegates: Tim Wong, Jerry Chernow.

Lakeside Press Job Shop (I.U. 450)—1334 Williamson, Madison 53703. (608) 255-1800. Delegate: Jerry Chernow.

Working at the L-P Mill *continued from p. 1*

why no one in Earth First! will ever convince me that tree-spiking is safe or okay.

Loss of life or limb is a constant danger at L-P, but it doesn't happen every day. What *does* happen every day is the mind-numbing tedium of the job, and L-P's constant rush for production. Take the job of lumber grader. Rough cut lumber, 2x12 and up to 20-feet long, comes up on the chain, and the grader has to scan it, turn it over, decide the best way to trim it for length and split it for width, and put the grade marks and trim marks on the board. You have two to three seconds to perform all these tasks, while the chain keeps moving and the next board comes up. All night long. Back injuries, tendonitis, and shoulder strains, common among graders and other millworkers, are caused by turning over the heavy lumber. But the company just wants their production quotas. "We broke a production record in our section," said one of my sources. "We used to get pizzas and beer for that, but this time they just got us one of those 6-foot submarine sandwiches. We probably put \$200,000 in L-P's pockets that night, and they gave us a sandwich."

Of course in such a petty, dictatorial atmosphere, some petty dictators are bound to arise. And there is none better known at L-P than Dean Remstedt, swing shift foreman in the planing mill. Remstedt runs his shift with threats and favoritism, and is known as a racist. A few years ago he passed out a flyer making racist jokes about Jesse Jackson. It offended some of the millworkers so much that they took it to the *Ukiah Daily Journal* (anonymously, of course). Remstedt denied that there was a problem. "It was something laying in the break room that we was laughing about," Remstedt told the *Journal*. But Hispanic workers, who make up about one-third of the shift, were not laughing. "To me, when I got that, that was from the company," one of them told the *Journal* reporter. And of course, L-P's upper management did nothing to change that impression.

Millworkers say Remstedt is "a fanatic about production" and that he "intimi-

dates people into taking chances [with safety] for fear of being disciplined or of losing their job." He sets the example with his own reckless behavior, which has led to him having several on-the-job accidents himself. He once climbed onto an automatic lumber stacking machine that was not properly turned off, and he was knocked to ground when the auto-cycle started up and the lumber moved forward, sending him to the hospital with minor injuries. Another time he stood on the forks of a forklift raised to a high position so he could reach something overhead. He fell off and knocked himself out cold. They wrote up the forklift driver for that one, but never write up Remstedt, even though the injuries to others on his shift have been a lot more serious than his own, including a woman who lost her leg walking between roller cases on a machine that bands lumber.

So it's not surprising, considering his racism and his safety record, that it was on Remstedt's shift when Fortunado Reyes was killed. Remstedt was off that night, but he had long ago set the pattern of work practices on the shift. A few days earlier Remstedt had ridiculed Fortunado in front of his co-workers for pushing the emergency stop too much and slowing down production. "He called Forty a sissy, and that's not all," say his friends. No one knows exactly how he died because no one saw or heard it. But apparently Fortunado was straightening lumber on a tray when he was caught unawares by another moving tray of boards, and was crushed between the lumber and machines steel beams. Co-workers found him lying on the catwalk. "We looked up and Forty was lying there with his ear on the catwalk, like he was listening in. I said, 'Hey, what are you doing?' but he didn't answer. We poked him and he didn't move, and we knew something was really wrong. When we turned him over you could see the indentations from the lumber in his chest." Some of the millworkers, and later the ambulance crew, tried to revive Fortunado with CPR, but it was too late. "By the time the ambulance took him away he was already starting to bloat up," eyewitnesses said.

Fortunado's death outraged some of the millworkers, who were tired of Remstedt endangering people's lives for the sake of production. A few of them decided to break the silence and tell the truth to OSHA, even at the risk of their own jobs. As a result, L-P was cited for two safety violations, including the emergency stop policy, and fined the pitiful amount of \$1,200 for taking a man's life. Remstedt was also ordered to give a safety talk on the proper use of the emergency stop. "But one week later he was doing it again like nothing happened, climbing all over the machinery," said a disillusioned worker.

Still some people didn't give up, including lawyers for Fortunado's widow Maria. (L-P awarded Maria a total of \$2000 for "burial expenses" for Fortunado.) And last September, the Mendocino County D.A. surprised us all by filing criminal charges against L-P for Fortunado's death. This resulted in another slap on the wrist and another insultingly low \$5000 fine for L-P. Then, to add to the insult, L-P President Harry Merlo himself wrote a memo to the Ukiah millworkers blaming "inflammatory claims by a few groups of rabid preservationists" for the "negative atmosphere" leading to the criminal charges.

It takes a real stretch of the imagination to blame environmentalists for anything having to do with Fortunado's death, but Harry Merlo is an imaginative guy. And the timber industry has been wildly successful so far at convincing the workers that it's the environmentalists, not the companies, who are to blame for their woes. "It's the only thing that gets a rise out of them," one man said of his co-workers' hatred of environmentalists. "Their heart beat gets faster and their eyes light up." How can people be so brainwashed to overlook the Mexico operation, the miles of clearcuts, the shrinking logs and the closing mills, and blame us instead of L-P? I asked several workers that question, and this was their reply: "Let's say you're a big macho logger, and you know something is wrong. You could blame L-P, but then you're powerless. Or you can blame Earth First! and then you can punch 'em."

Interestingly, the workers who talk to me (obviously a select group) often explain their own awareness in terms of L-P's environmental destruction. "I've always been environmentally conscious," says one. "My dad took us camping when we were in diapers. I've been backpacking since I was 9 years old." Another says: "I went hunting at my favorite spot in the Yolla Bolly Wilderness, and it was gone. It looked like a nuke hit because of L-P's clearcuts." "I like to take my son fishing," says another, "but L-P's wrecked the fishing in this county."

So what are the chances that the L-P workers will wake up before it's too late? Pretty slim. "The money's too good, and there's nothing else to do," a sawmill worker told me. L-P millworkers start at \$7.00/hour, but the top of the pay scale is \$13.51, or just over \$14 with night premiums. "Most people are just crawling in their holes, hoping the mill will keep running," my sources said. There's a lot of discontent under the surface, and a lot of people don't like the company. The people who talk to me all express the same feelings, and they all assume that no one else shares their views. So I guess there is some theoretical chance that some day something will make people mad enough to stand up to L-P. But the most common attitude at the Ukiah mill is "Gotta go to work" and "Don't make waves."

L-P employees have no say over company policy, and they work under conditions that privileged college kids and yuppie professionals can't even imagine. Environmentalists who blame them for the destruction of the forest are just as stupid as workers who blame environmentalists for the loss of their jobs. Some of the more conscious millworkers will try to find a way to get out, and these are the people most likely to ally with us. But most will try to keep working until the last pecker pole runs through the chipper. Then they'll drive off into the clearcuts, cursing the environmentalists for the loss of their jobs, while Harry Merlo counts his cash and moves on to the next killing field.

(reprinted from *Anderson Valley Advertiser*)

Letters

ture distribution, forming contingents at larger demonstrations, organizing protests and outreach, etc.), the AYF has held three mini-gatherings, actively participated in the *Love & Rage* Anarchist Newsmagazine project, and made up a good part of the Black Bloc at the January 26th anti-war demonstration in Washington, DC.

NY-AYF is a collective that was formed in September of 1990, out of the ashes of NYDAC (New York Direct Action Network). Our beliefs are basically in the class struggle vein, and we promote militant resistance to oppression (Basically, we're not that into getting passively arrested for sitting down). Our group holds sporadic meetings (aiming for weekly), and the amount of participants fluctuates, but it's usually around five to ten committed people.

As far as projects go, we're involved in a ton of 'em. We coordinate the AYF page for *Love & Rage*, produce the bi-monthly AYF internal bulletin, publish literature and pamphlets, run a distribution (called "Life's a Riot!"), and much more.

Well, that's about all. Hope to be hearing from you soon. Take care and keep up the struggle.

Your comrades at NYAYF
P.O. Box 365
Canal Street Station
New York City, NY 10013

Dear Friends:

Peace be with you. I'm in receipt of the current *Industrial Worker*. Thank you for including my short letter in it.

Fortunately Duke didn't win the governorship. Now he's running for the presidency. It appears that the Republican Party might soon be showing its true colors.

I agree with the perspective that "Labor Parties" are not the real answer for the working class. For the exact same reasons illustrated in the fine article by Jon Bekken. But neither can the working people ignore the electoral process. We must vote issues and not party line. But

we must also make sure that the messenger is the right one.

I'm currently reviewing an important case on prison overcrowding. It's from Ohio and the prisoners won, all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. This can also prove very important for us incarcerated in this gulag. As we may be able to stop them from overcrowding this gulag even more than it is presently overcrowded.

Until next time, I remain with a blessing for a more peaceful and just world.

In Solidarity,
Jacob Feuerwerker

Dear Fellow Workers:

I'm not sure what history books Jon Bekken has been reading lately, but please allow me to suggest a few corrections regarding his piece, "If Voting Could Change Things..." from the November issue of the *Industrial Worker*.

First, Bekken states that the 8-hour day "had been established decades before it was signed into law by union organization." Perhaps in a few industries and scattered shops this was the case, but the vast majority worked at straight pay for whatever duration the employer saw fit. Without a doubt, federal wage and hour laws of the 1930s were only won as a result of heroic rank-and-file direct action and organizing. Nevertheless, only when established on the political front did the majority, for the first time, union and non-union, come to enjoy overtime pay after 40 hours. (We still don't have the "8-hour day" in this country the last time I looked).

Second, while it is true that "minimum wage rates have always lagged far behind the average wages workers have won through our own efforts," the fact is that the majority of U.S. workers have never enjoyed a union contract or union wages. Although trashed by Reagan/Bush over the last decade or so, the minimum wage has provided some protection for the country's lowest paid unorganized workers.

Finally, Bekken claims that unemployment insurance "was established as a sop

to block unions' efforts to win the 6-hour day." This is a gross simplification of the politics and forces involved. Whatever the case, I would ask Bekken, do you see unemployment insurance as a victory or defeat for the U.S. working class?

What Bekken is attempting to do of course, is convince us to hold no illusion in the efficacy of independent working class electoral politics. But the Canadian health care system is no illusion. Neither is the French workers' 5-weeks paid vacation, nor the Swedish workers' comprehensive social services. These achievements and many others have come through organizing efforts of working people on the political as well as the economic front.

I have no illusion of a U.S. Labor Party leading us to a successful triumph over capitalism, or even that such a party will consistently champion the working class. But to insist, as Bekken does, that a party of Labor has nothing to offer the U.S. working class but austerity, division, and "diversion from more productive efforts" is pure sectarian demagoguery.

Yours for the O.B.U.
Ron Kaminkow

Dear IW:

October 21 began the trial of Ronald Cross, Gordon Lazore and Roger Lavore on 59 charges connected with Mohawk defense of The Pines against police and army attack at Oka Quebec in summer '90. Trial is expected to last three or four months. The government began its case by asking the judge to deny political defense.

Only native persons are subjected to metal detectors as they enter the heavily guarded courtroom. The first 10 days of the trial have seen government witnesses trying to prove the accused broke into homes and damaged property during the 78-day war waged on the community by the state.

For a year and a half since the defenders of sacred land voluntarily left their refuge in the TC building and were

arrested, Quebec police and RCMP continued to surround and occupy the communities with helicopters, boats and cars with daily incidents of harassment, search and arrest. Confrontations are frequent. Mohawks say they are afraid to attend the trial. October 31, a band of Mohawk teenagers attacked Quebec police station at Akwesasne (near NY border) with stones and molotovs, trashing several vehicles.

Info and support can be directed to Kanienkehaka Solidarity Group, c/o Students Society of McGill University, 3480 McTavish, Montreal, Quebec H3A 1X9, Canada.

C. Murray

Dear Fellow Workers:

Last week I stopped by Bound Together Books (the anarchist bookstore in San Francisco). While there, I talked with two members of Bound Together's "Books for Prisoners" project. They told me that they receive, on average, 25 requests for literature per week, and they showed me an entire drawer full of yet-to-be-answered requests and several shopping bags full of unmailed packages.

They rely entirely on donations to cover their mailing costs, and they're flat broke. So, I'm asking my fellow Wobs to dig deep and send them a contribution. Their work is important, because they are one of only two anarchist books-for-prisoners projects in the country, while there are a number of nazi and religious fundamentalist groups providing reactionary, hate-filled literature to prisoners.

So please send them a contribution if you can. Their address is "Books for Prisoners", Bound Together Books, 1369 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. Make checks out to Bound Together Books, but note on your check that it's a donation to Books for Prisoners.

Solidarity,
X340151

International Notes

Caribbean Free Trade

U.S. firms registered a \$1.8 billion trade surplus with member countries of the Caribbean Basin Initiative last year. This is the fourth consecutive year that the U.S. trade surplus with the 24 countries has increased under the agreement providing for duty-free imports and exports.

2000 Emiliano Zapata Refinery Workers Fired

As part of an austerity package intended to pave the way for privatization and free trade, the Mexican government has fired more than 2000 workers from the sugar refinery named after the anarchist hero of the 1910-1917 revolution. Steel worker unions at two steel mills have been given a choice between massive layoffs or total closure.

Although some local union leaders (especially in affected industries) have protested, national union leaders—closely tied to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party—are supporting the government's economic program, under which average purchasing power has fallen by an estimated 60 percent over the last ten years. The minimum wage today is \$4 a day. "Union leaders are rational," one government official said. "They know that things have gone well for them for too long a time..."

Unionists Pay for Strikes

After martial law was lifted in 1987, Taiwanese workers responded with a wave of union organization and strikes. While dismissals of union activists, criminal charges, and threats of violence are still very prevalent, management is increasingly turning to the courts to strangle unions by bankrupting their members. In many industries strikes are by definition illegal. So management has begun to sue union activists for compensation for their "criminal" activities, winning enormous judgements from sympathetic courts.

When workers at the Miaoli Transport Company Union struck in August 1988, four unionists were arrested and charged with breaking anti-assembly and demonstration laws, and with inciting the strike. Each was sentenced to three to five months in jail. A year later management sued, demanding they compensate the company for strike-related losses of US\$91,000. Having won that case, the company is now pressing another against the union itself for US\$3.4 million.

Eleven union activists with the Far East Textile Company Union were similarly arrested and convicted after a 15-day

strike in May, 1989. In August of this year a judge sentenced each to a few months in prison for violation of the "rules to regulate the agricultural, mining, industrial and trading sectors during state of siege." (The Taiwanese government maintains it has been under siege ever since it was established.) Far East Textile management has sued unionists for US\$1.76 million in compensation—which would not only confiscate their savings and homes, but would leave them and their children bankrupt and in debt for the rest of their lives. (Source: *Asian Labour Update*)

Poverty and the Environment

A report released by the International Center for Research on Women says that even though poor people recognize that they have a vested interest in conserving natural resources and maintaining healthy environments, poverty often dictates survival strategies that contribute to environmental degradation. Eighty percent of Latin America's poor live in areas where severe environmental hazards and ecological destruction threaten their well being, and the situation is aggravated by the practice of subsistence agriculture on ecologically fragile lands, deforestation, and a lack of soil conservation. Government programs to promote chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides accelerate the devastation. Reversing this trend requires strengthening the economic and social power of poor farmers in the region, the study ("Women, Poverty, and the Environment in Latin America") concludes. Access to land, credit and technology could give workers the incentive and the breathing room to safeguard and conserve natural resources. (Source: *Times of the Americas*)

New World Odor

The following remarks are from an editorial in the October 1991 edition of *Asian Labour Update*: "For the last six months, columnists and editors for publications around the world have been trumpeting the break in the Cold War as an historic victory for capitalism and, they say, democracy..."

"The new world order—whatever that may mean, and it is not clear yet—has been bestowed on us whether we like it or not. To be fair, there are benefits. The thawing of super-power relations, the reduced tension which enables arms reductions, and the space created for the possibility of a new vision of global political relationships and responsibilities, hold at least some promise of change for the better.

"However, this new world order is already steeped in self-contradiction. In the West, in the North, for many people democracy is too simplistic a concept; it implies a certain electoral system and certain social rights and freedoms. But this simple concept is false and inadequate. For the world's poor, or oppressed, or marginalized, or exploited, or homeless, the Western-led new world order is meaningless—mere cosmetic rhetoric—unless it brings about substantial changes to human dignity and people's livelihoods.

"Those who gave us the new world order have been quick to condemn anything smacking of socialism, anything tinged with the flavor of the 'left.' And yet the human suffering and deprivation which gives rise to political conflict has not abated. Improved living standards, personal freedoms and security, homes, health and education, lasting peace and participatory democracy will have to be delivered before the term 'new world order' has any meaning whatsoever..."

"Labor, environmental, women's peace, housing and human rights organizations have as much work ahead of them now as they did a year ago, in many cases perhaps even more, given the political space that has arisen out of the largely welcomed failure of centrally governed 'communist' systems.

"Here, however, lies an enormous challenge to people who have worked in such organizations. They have, amongst other formidable tasks, that of planning, describing, and contextualizing their work in the political terms of reference dictated by the realities of the 1990s.

"It is foolish to pretend that the labor struggles of today exactly parallel those of the 1920s or even the 1950s; there are substantial and significant differences. While it is true that most of the fundamental problems facing workers are alarmingly similar in character—so much so that one might wonder if we have made any progress at all in the last fifty odd years—the socio-political environment is unlike anything we have experienced.

"Much of the change can be attributed to the new information technologies, to the capacity of societies' technical infrastructures to inform and educate at a pace and to an extent previously unimaginable. While the reliability or value of the information can often be held to question, its impact is undeniable."

Of interest along these lines, our fellow workers in Asia are sponsoring a conference on the use of film and video productions by grassroots organizations in the region, exchanging information on companies and working conditions in various Asian countries, and generally trying to overcome the bosses' monopoly on up-to-date reliable information.

264 Unionists Killed

The International Confederation of Trade Unions reports that 264 unionists were killed between January 1990 and March 1991, with at least 2,422 unionists detained or arrested in 72 countries.

Solidarity Needed

After workers, mostly women, struck the South Korean cosmetics company Pacific Chemical earlier this year, management turned on the union, firing union activists, calling in police, and suing union officers for compensation for alleged damage to factory equipment. More than 40 union activists have been fired, and police have arrested several others for participating in the strike. The union is demanding withdrawal or cancellation of legal actions against union members, release of detained workers, and resumption of wage negotiations. Protest letters may be sent to: Mr. Dong Gun Han, President Pacific Chemical Co., 181 Hangangro 2-ga, Yongsan-ku, Seoul, South Korea; Mr. Chae Young-chol, Minister of Labour, Gi-Chum, Kyonggi-do, Seoul, South Korea. Please send copies to the Committee for Asian Women (57 Peking Road, 4/F, Kowloon, Hong Kong), which is coordinating the international solidarity appeal.

Management Locked Out

When the Argentinian government privatized the Caja Nacional de Ahorro y Seguro bank in Buenos Aires, workers staged an occupation, locking out the new owners and demanding a living wage.

Throughout Latin America, workers are protesting austerity programs that endanger their ability to feed themselves and their families. In Kingstown, Jamaica, several thousand workers joined an Oct. 17 demonstration against the free-market policies of "socialist" Prime Minister Michael Manley. The president of the Honduran energy workers union has called for "permanent mobilization to oppose the deadly project that the international financing organizations have imposed on us."

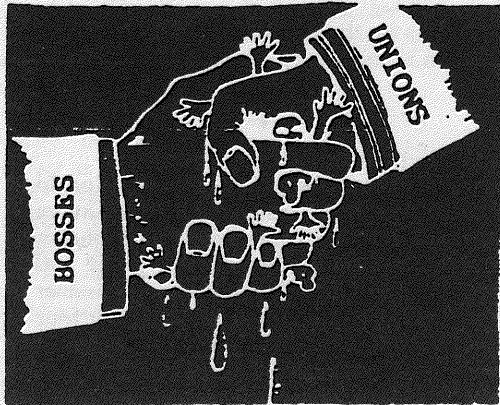
Some 120,000 Central American children under age five die each year of malnutrition according to a Nov. 4 report by the ministries of health of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Former Costa Rican finance minister Otton Solis blames increased concentration of wealth and transnationalization of capital for rising malnutrition and a resurgence of deaths from malaria and measles after a 15-year absence. "I don't believe that the Central American people are going to remain passive in the face of the situation," Solis said.

What's Wrong with British Trade Unions?

The existing trade unions are in disarray. After more than a decade of Thatcherism they are now desperately seeking a return to power through some sort of social partnership with the state and the bosses. Faced with the continuing threat of privatisation on the buses and on the railways, all that Knapp, Fullick, Morris and Company can offer are prayers for a Labour Party victory at the next general election. Even if the Labour Party does scrape home do we seriously believe that Kinnock will do anything to improve the pay and conditions of transport workers? The history of Labour governments speaks for itself. The present Labour leadership have made it clear that they have no intention of reversing the process of privatisation on the buses, which has led to lower pay, de-unionisation and chaotic services. What strategy do our union leaders offer if the Tories win again? Total surrender...

As transport workers we have always endured disgusting rates of pay for dangerously long and unsocial hours. After more than a century of labour organization all that the unions have won for us is a daily grind at the end of which most people still find it a struggle to pay the bills. The existing trade unions in our industry are moving towards a future as bigger and richer financial institutions, offering services such as mortgages and credit cards with no attempt to defend, let alone improve, our pay and conditions.

It is no surprise that unions are increasingly concentrating on financial services—the whole structure of trade unions is increasingly divorced from workplace concerns. Even at the lowest level of the union, the branch, we have many officials who see their role not as confronting management, but rather involving themselves in internal union business: sitting on endless committees; becoming JP's—in fact, anything which



will enable them to further their own careers and to avoid doing a day's work. The further up the union structure you look, the more remote the officials are and the better paid they seem to be.

When workers take the initiative themselves to organize industrial action they invariably end up fighting not only management but also their own union

which appears interested only in getting them back to work as quickly as possible and restoring industrial peace. On the rare occasions that unions have managed to organize strikes in the transport industry, their members' sacrifices have been undermined by divided and competing unions—witness the 1989 railways strike when ASLEF instructed their members to cross NUR picket lines. No attempt has ever been made to coordinate action right across the public transport sector. The nearest we have had to this was in 1989 when London Underground workers coordinated their unofficial one-day strikes with those of the NUR. Imagine the effect if bus workers had taken action at the same time.

However, it is not only a problem of reformist trade unions that we workers have to face but the whole nature of the capitalist system which organizes society into two classes whose interests are directly opposed. All this system can offer the working class today is increasing poverty. Nor do we see any role for any form of marxism, which as Eastern European workers know to their cost, results in greater misery and exploitation for the working class.

We therefore advocate the building of a revolutionary union of transport workers. This union would be federated to other unions in other industries to form one workers' organization independent of all political parties. This union should be run by and for transport workers, free from overpaid bureaucrats and careerists. The aim in the short term

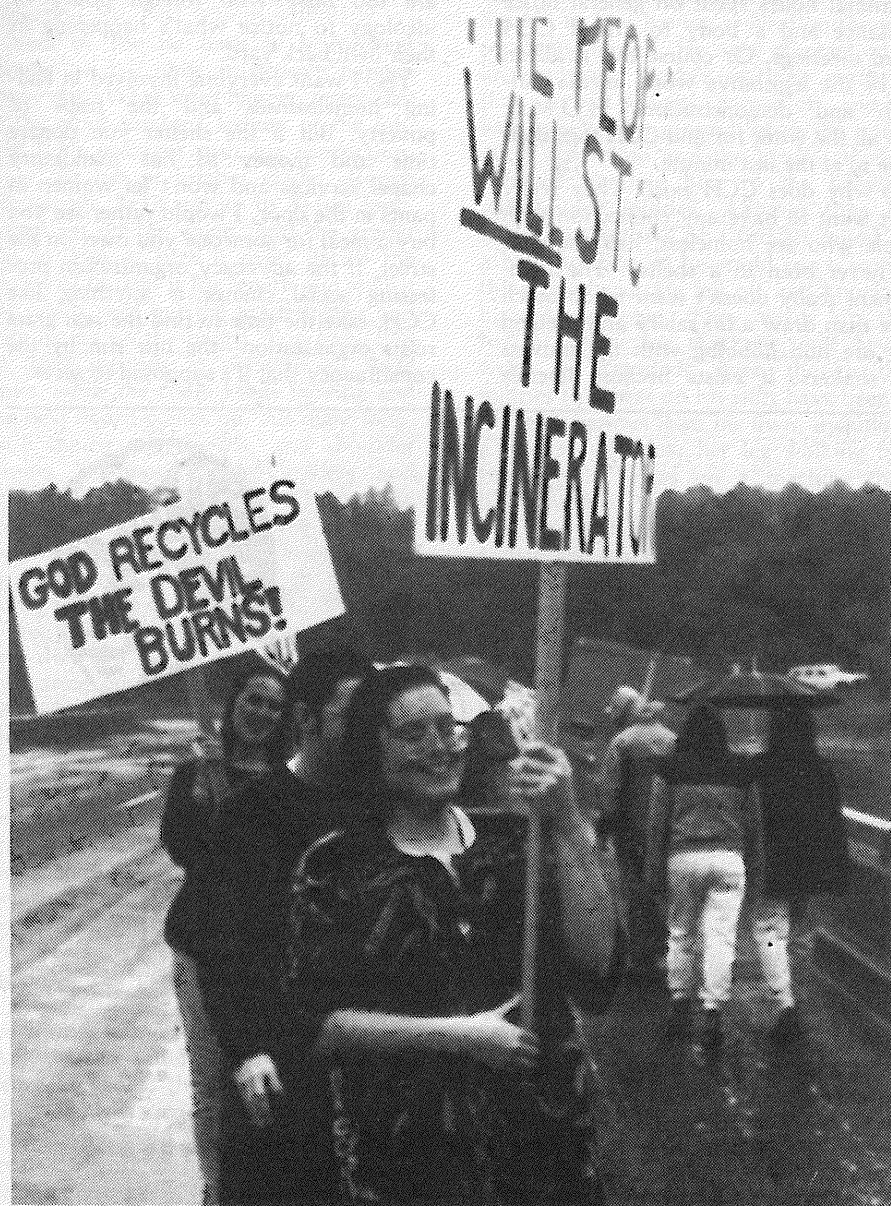
being to improve pay and conditions and in the long term to prepare workers through taking direct control of their own struggles, for the day when they take control of their own industries and run them for the benefit of the community as a whole, based on need, not profit.

Obviously, a revolutionary union will not be built overnight. We therefore advocate the creation of a network of transport workers whose aim will be the setting up of such a union. This network would be open to workers from all sections of the transport industry. Initially the network's role will be to bring like-minded activists together to exchange ideas and circulate information. We feel there is a crying need for basic strike support within the industry, therefore the network will support any workers in struggle whether they are backed by the unions or not.

In rejecting the idea that the existing unions can be reformed into fighting organizations this network will oppose the strategy of standing for full-time union positions in the attempt to get more left wing union leaders. That is not to say the network will ignore the existing unions. We will try to force them to defend the workers they so readily take dues off and expose them when they fail to deliver. The network sees its role not as working within the existing union structures, but rather in the workplace: that is where our power lies, where conflict with management arises and where we can involve all the people we work with regardless of which union they belong to.

(reprinted from *Transport Worker*, Summer 1991)

From Around the Union



Gateway Greens protest Times Beach incinerator project.

Boston, MA

An angry fellow worker Dani Mavronicles, an openly lesbian student at the Harbor Campus of University of Massachusetts, announced a demonstration will happen when Marine recruiters come to the campus next. The demonstration is to protest the University's hollow anti-discrimination policy.

Mavronicles is the woman who filed an Affirmative Action grievance with the University's administration. The grievance was about allowing a discriminatory organization (the military) on campus. "The University has a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and is funded by a state that has a gay rights law. For the administration to permit and even give special privilege to such homophobic and heterosexual groups is a travesty," said Mavronicles.

Members of groups such as ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), Queer Nation, and BAGLY (Boston Area Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth), U Mass Coalition for Peace, The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Center of U Mass, as well as students, faculty, and staff of the campus and others, have pledged to show their support of a true policy of non-discrimination and will be at the protest.

Mavronicles had temporarily stalled military presence on campus with her

grievance. UMB Chancellor Sherry Penney sent out a memo shortly after the grievance was filed stating that the recruiters were banned until a decision could be made about the policy.

However, a November 19, 1991 memo from Chancellor Penney announced that a command had come down from University President E.K. Fretwell to allow military recruiters back on campus, effective immediately.

The memo was faxed to the Marines, and they requested time on campus as soon as possible. The date has not been set. "The Marines will be here next week, and it is an insult not only to lesbians, bisexuals, and gay men everywhere, but an insult to all who love civil liberties and freedom. If the military were discriminating against women, people of color, or a certain ethnicity, the lines would be clear. There would be no way the military would be here. But we queers (lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transsexuals, transvestites, and transgenderists) are still discriminated and bashed every day. And believe me, this is a bashing from the UMB administration."

Mavronicles has vowed to remove the military on campus by any means necessary. She has sought legal counsel from GLAD (Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders) and will press a lawsuit. She has also contacted many organizations, some of which are listed above.

Lehigh Valley, PA

Things have been pretty busy for the Lehigh Valley GMB recently.

The Lehigh Valley Coalition for a Safe Environment (LVCASE) has run into a series of obstacles and hurdles in its fight to prevent Keystone Cement and ESSROC Materials from burning toxic hazardous waste in their cement kilns.

A few months ago, a delegation of people from CASE (including a Fellow Worker) met with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (DER) head Art Davis to discuss the cement kiln issue. Nobody was satisfied with the answers Davis gave. Dissatisfaction grew when the DER mailed a form letter to CASE members which, among other things, asserted, "Cement kilns are very effective in destroying hazardous waste. The extremely high temperatures and residence times in the kiln are ideal for destroying the organic components. In addition, the particulate control systems in the stacks are very effective in capturing the inorganic and toxic metal waste." These statements are virtual echoes of the cement companies' statements. All of these assertions are, of course, untrue.

The DER has also admitted that the required risk assessment for the plant will not be carried out before the permit is granted. Instead, the risk assessment will be done some time in 1992, after the plant will have already started burning toxics. DER's reasoning for the tardy risk assessment? Poor Keystone has already been waiting over a year for its permit, and the DER wants to "make a decision on the application in a timely manner and cannot wait until the risk approach is fully developed." Through the grapevine, CASE has heard that one DER official bluntly acknowledged that "the DER isn't going to put Keystone out of business."

The DER has thus proven that it isn't in the business of regulating toxic waste or of protecting workers or the environment—it is in the business of granting permits to allow industry to do what it wants. It now appears a virtual certainty that, within the next few months, the DER will grant Keystone its permit to incinerate toxics.

The CASE coalition is determined to keep fighting even if Keystone receives its permit. It is hoped that the DER's action will galvanize public support (which has been slacking off lately) and introduce new vigor into the campaign. The Coalition is also investigating new tactics to raise the level of confrontation and to force Governor Casey and cement officials to respond. For the most part, CASE is using the same old tactics (letter-writing, raffle tickets) that have failed in the past. The LV IWW is attempting to inject some militant tactics into the fight. After all, as we Wobs know, "direct action gets the goods."

The workers at the ESSROC plant have lately been too involved with contract negotiations to play an active role in CASE. Despite IWW efforts to build solidarity between the workers and the community, the Paperworkers Union, which represents the workers, has not made a great impact in the fight. The union has claimed that it does not consider the incineration plan to be a contract issue. But some Wobs are suspicious that the union bureaucrats will attempt a trade-off—"we won't get involved with the toxics fight if you give us a \$2-an-hour raise." While a number

of ESSROC workers remain militantly and outspokenly opposed to the incineration plans, many more workers have been brow-beaten into silence.

While all of this was going on, the Lehigh Valley Wobs found the time to do strike support work at a couple of places. In late November, 800 nurses at Easton Hospital went on strike. The dispute centered around the issue of mandatory overtime. Management at the hospital was making a habit of underscheduling nurses for a shift and then "volunteering" someone to work a double shift. The strikers had solid support from the community (nobody wants a nurse to work 16 hours straight and then stick a needle into their arm—no one, that is, except management).

Numerous times during the strike, members of the LV IWW were there in solidarity. The Flying Column Wobbly Band was an instant hit, and performed "Union Maid," "Put it on the Ground" and "Solidarity Forever" virtually non-stop. One of the striking nurses was inspired to write her own song about the strike, and the Wobs tacked on a couple of new verses and added the tune to their repertoire:

TUNE: "The Beverly Hillbillies"

by Cindy Shriver of the Pennsylvania Nurses Association and the LV IWW

We are a loving group of nurses in the PNA

We dedicate our lives to helping patients everyday

We love our patients dearly and we want them to get well

But we're tired of management making our lives hell

Misery. Long hours. No respect.

We nurses work hard everyday, we're always on the run

And working 16 hours a day, it isn't any fun

Instead of hiring nurses here's what management will do

They'll work us till we drop and stick a needle into you

Bleary-eyed. No social life. Slavery.

But now we've had enough and we aren't taking any more until

We get what we want we are walking out the door

And if you want to get us back there is only one way—

Just hire some more nurses, end those 16 hour days

Shorter hours. A little respect. And we'll come back now, y'hear?

The strike was a wonderful tactical success—the picket lines were long, loud and boisterous. Unfortunately, the strike ended after three weeks in a settlement that did not do away with mandatory overtime. Instead, management and union officials agreed to meet every two months for "discussions" on the problem. Some Wobs have remarked that they think they smell a sell-out.

As the strike was winding down, another group of nurses hit the bricks at the State Hospital. This strike centered around control of the union's pension funds. The Flying Column Band put in an appearance and, after our Branch meeting, we all went down to the picket line to help out.

Finally, a couple of LV Wobs managed to find a few hours to talk about IWW history (past and present) with a class at the local community college.

Union Busting 101 (cont'd from p. 1)

After "Luncheon," our budding union-busters discuss "A Step-By-Step Strategy to Preserve Your Company's Union-Free Status." Among the topics discussed here are "Union avoidance as a highly desirable by-product of positive employee relations" (could this possibly mean "buy your workers off"?), "The need to develop and articulate your company's policy on preserving its union-free status" (tell your workers you don't want them saying the U-word), and "Why it is so important to motivate your supervisors to engage in preventive employee relations practices" (i.e., have them fire anybody who says the U-word).

In the next session, entitled "How to Successfully Meet the Challenge Once Organizing Begins—Part I," young union-busters-to-be are taught "The labor laws and how they can be used

against your company" (and, of course, how you can use labor laws against your workers) and "How to identify and blunt the early warning signs of union activity" (i.e., how to identify and fire the organizers).

On Day Two of the seminar, Part II begins with "Union authorization cards—their significance and what you may lawfully say to prevent them from ever being signed" (and if you say something unlawful that we tell you about, it isn't our fault), and goes on to "Unfair labor practices—what they are and how to avoid committing them while resisting union organizing attempts" (or at least how to not get caught while you are committing them).

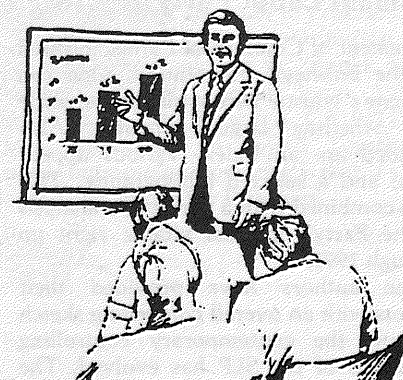
Finally, our young corporate slimes learn "What Can Your Company Do to Preserve Its Union-Free Status Before

Organizing Starts." Some topics: "How to avoid personnel policies that foster people to think union" (get rid of any worker that has half a brain), "How to employ the most effective applicant assessment techniques" (don't hire anyone who has half a brain), and "How to assess and influence employee values" (intimidate the hell out of the half a brain that works).

One would think that it might be nice to have a few Wobs attend the "training course" and perhaps set a few folks straight on union-busting. But alas, Executive Enterprises notes, in bold type, "Attendance is limited to representatives of business organizations only. Individuals affiliated with union organizations are not eligible for registration."

"The discussion will be frank," the brochure concludes. "The use of recording devices will be strictly prohibited."

Fellow shareholders, there is no doubt about it. Our company's success has been based on robbing the people we pay to produce our commodities. Whether they believe they are middle class, working class or whatever is irrelevant. Our principles boil down to this: Sell what the bastards make, while paying them as little as possible for their efforts.



Non-Profit Hypocrisy

by Julia Goode

Don't let anyone tell you, "if times only got a little tougher, we could start to see some real political change." I sure don't want to see things get any worse. The current amount of soil erosion far exceeds the Great Dustbowls of the 1930s. The measles, TB and sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise and are expected to reach record breaking levels. The amount of people who are homeless and the length of time they remain homeless exceeds that of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Homelessness has become such an accepted factor of our society that East Coast universities are offering graduate degrees in homeless shelter management. For-profit businesses offering social services to people who are homeless, and portable shelters/shacks offered at a "nominal" price are becoming commonplace. Shelters are the only affordable "housing" being created. Sure there are some non-profits sincerely trying to fill the gaps, but are they just duplicating the structure that created the poverty cycle in the first place?

We love to buy memberships in the Coalition to End ——— (insert your favorite issue—Homelessness, Apartheid, Clear Cutting, etc.). We participate in their —athon fundraisers and feel warm all over when we see the Coalitions' names in the media.

A standard speech we hear at the Coalitions' rallies are "Does the company you do business with have operations in South Africa? If you don't know maybe you should find out and adjust your business deals accordingly." I heard this speech again yesterday, but the issue was domestic violence as a cause of homelessness. Basically it is a valid point.

Does the non-profit you support:

- pay a living wage to its employees?
- practice affirmative hiring procedures?
- have a labor contract?
- use unionized printers and other contractors?
- have any real/honest connection to the population it's supposed to be serving?

Chicago has a fairly well established group of homeless advocates. There are at least three city-wide coalitions solely addressing the issues of homelessness; two provide services and advocates for change and the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (CCH), which provides no direct services. Their staffs are all headed by white men; white women make up the majority of the staff with a sprinkling of African Americans in the lowest paid positions.

With a staff of six full-time employees, CCH's white male director is paid more than twice the two lowest paid positions held by African American women. I am not even going to get into more specific labor practices. I am sure you all know some horrendous workplace scenarios, just change the name on the door to CCH.

Every attempt to get people who were or had been homeless onto the Board of Directors was successfully blocked. No surprise that a group started up, which is comprised solely of homeless individuals —Homeless on the Move for Equality (H.O.M.E.). And yes, CCH has been nearly as successful in co-opting them as the U.S. government has historically been in co-opting non-profits—by providing funding.

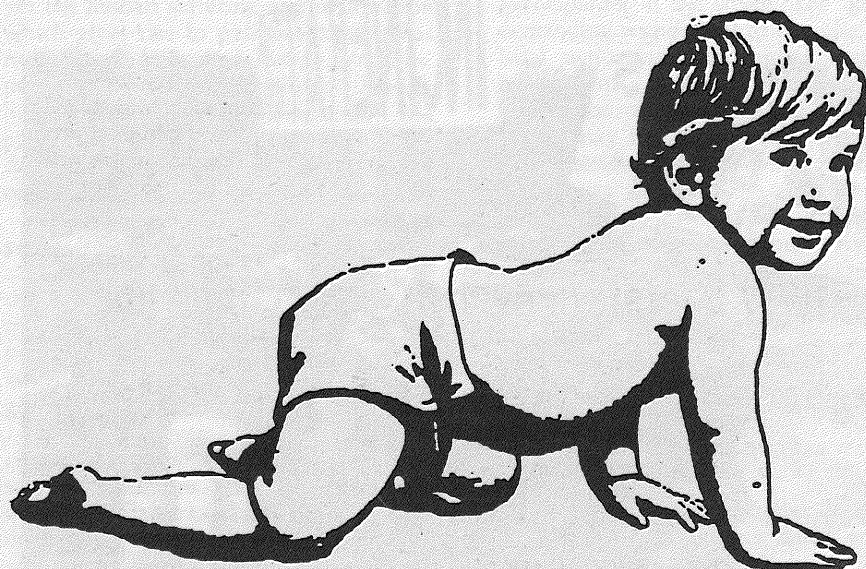
In return for a corner of office space and use of donated phones, H.O.M.E.

must supply CCH with a minimum of 20 hours of unpaid receptionist work, plus additional hours spent on general office assistance and a body to attend CCH Board meetings. Of course this is all on top of the legislative work, media outreach and demonstrations H.O.M.E. does all the work for and CCH tags their name to at the last minute.

So why does CCH exist? They really don't want to have any connection with people who are homeless, half the staff has never been in a shelter. The management really doesn't want to do much more than draw a fat salary and pretend they are hobnobbing with the movers and shakers. It exists because liberals

fund it, its constituency has no power to blow the whistle on CCH, and radicals are too busy with foreign policy or ideology to notice what's happening in their own back yard.

Yes, I want everyone involved in ending homelessness and the traps of poverty. But if the shelter you donate time and money to has mandatory chapel services and won't let women in pants in the door, I would rather see you buy a meal for someone you meet on the street. If the advocacy organization professing social change is anything like CCH, take the time to find the real grass roots organization—the one run by the constituency that it's supposed to serve.



**A Boss is like a diaper...
Always on your ass and
usually full of shit.**

Migrant Labor

"The migrants are hated for the following reasons: that they are ignorant and dirty people, that they are carriers of disease, that they increase the necessity for police and the tax bill for schooling in a community. They are never received into a community nor into the life of a community."

—*Their Blood is Strong*

By the time John Steinbeck wrote that in a pamphlet in 1936, the migration of the dispossessed toward the "greener pastures" of California's Central Valley was already well under way.

The country, still reeling from the ravages of the Great Depression, and scarred by drought in the Midwest, witnessed a westward migration on a scale not seen since the end of the Civil War. Thousands of people, particularly in the Midwest, dusted out, tracted out, booted off their land by the unscrupulous practices of banks and "land companies," headed west along the highways and roads toward California, where they hoped to find a new life. Instead, they found suspicion, bigotry, hatred, and landowners as two-faced in their practices as the banks had been. California, the new Eden, turned out to be another hard dollar, and culturally repressive as well.

The Central Valley of California has long been a Mecca for travelers and those seeking to settle and start a new life. Like a green and gold magnet, the fertile Valley attracted people from all over the nation and the world. The first real immigrants were the Mexicans, most

of whom arrived in the mid-1800s along with the Forty-Niners during the Gold Rush. In the 1860s and '70s, thousands of Chinese made their way to California, seeking rich farmland and ending up as laborers in the fields, mines, and on the railroads. In the 1890s, the Japanese came, settling in areas such as Livingston, where they planted orchards and strawberry fields. They were followed by Filipinos and Koreans. Basques congregated in Bakersfield, Sikhs in Marysville, and Swedes in Kingsburg. Many came fleeing adverse and oppressive conditions elsewhere. Armenians began settling in Fresno around 1885, with most arriving between 1900 and 1920, refugees from the Turkish state's genocide. Between 1910 and 1920, increasing numbers of campesinos entered the Valley, fleeing political and economic strife in Mexico. The 1930s saw the "Dustbowl" invasion by tenant and other farmers from the Midwest as chronicled by John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath*.

More recently, the Central Valley has seen an influx of Laotians, Mien, Vietnamese, Salvadorans, and many others, greatly increasing cultural and ethnic diversity. This has, as in the past, led to serious problems. Nowhere in California do the established and the newer cultures clash so powerfully. With more than 5 million people living in the 400-mile-long valley, the population is growing twice as fast as in the rest of the state.

A recent study by the Sacramento History Center revealed more than 90 distinct ethnic groups—and that was

before newer groups were found, such as the Mien people from rural Laos.

While some Central Valley residents struggle to bridge the gap between longtime residents and newcomers, resentment is growing, all the way to the state's capital. Governor Pete Wilson, displaying another facet of his chauvinistic persona, recently "blamed" California's budget problems in part on a growing refugee and immigrant population. Citing rising education, health care, and welfare costs, this panjandrum stated that, "We're getting more than our fair share of both [immigrants and refugees]." He added that refugees from Latin America and Southeast Asia "typically...begin their life in America in another place and quickly find their way to where their cousins are, in California."

This flood is unstoppable. People come, as they have for generations, to sell their skills on the labor market. For some, the climate and the chance to be with family and friends already in the state are attractive. Others migrate back and forth or at least send sums home to their poorer relatives. Still others come for the possibility, however small, of farming a plot of land or setting up their own business. And, like a cancer, the resentment and the suspicion fester.

Sadly, much of this ill feeling toward the newcomers is being passed on by those who experienced much the same hatred and distrust over 50 years ago. But then, it's the same system, the same competition between workers selling their abilities on an oversupplied market.

In Weedpatch, in Kern County, sits the migrant camp made famous in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Today, known as the Sunset Migrant Farm Labor Camp, it is

home for about 130 Chicano families, many from Texas and the northern Mexican state of Nuevo Leon. For six months of the year, they live here while working. Although some are migrant workers, many second- and third-generation Chicanos who stayed to make a life in nearby Lamont are now part of the community. But the migrants who live in the camp today and the Dust Bowl migrants who once lived there have little to say to each other.

Librarian Doris Weddell, at the small Lamont branch of the Kern County Library has seen first-hand the animosity between the two groups: "Sometimes it really blows me away when you see people whose families faced the worst discrimination in the '30s saying, 'Oh those Mexicans! They're always on welfare.'" Ironically, the same was once said some 50-odd years ago. Weddell explained it simply: "There was a time you didn't talk about it; Okie was a dirty word."

Although it is between 50 and 60 years later, and much of the Central Valley's new population is more culturally and ethnically varied, many of the problems that exist are basically the same now as they were in the 1930s. And being a part of history, it should be noted that the problems are *still* results, not causes. It is regrettable that those who experienced the hate, suspicion, and bigotry of one era should turn those feelings on others of a different era. Something, somehow, has been lost or misplaced in the ensuing years. An amnesia has taken hold.

The facts of history remain; when property accumulates in too few hands, it is taken; when a majority are cold and hungry, they will take what they need by force.

—Dave Collins

Socialist Labor Party (cont'd from p. 8)

movement of Communist Parties inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution. One can wet one's whistle here while at the same time whetting larger appetites. Also included are an index, various appendices, and a selected bibliography. This is all combined with a perceptive analysis of the Party's internal affairs, right up through 1991.

The authors have provided their readers with an overall compelling sketch of how the contemporary controlling apparatus of the SLP has evolved. The

petrification of authority, coming as it has and does, from the top of the Socialist Labor Party in the National Office (N.O.) has apparently yet to have been penetrated by the millions of leaflets passed out by its members and sympathizers on the street corners of the 20th century calling for a strictly democratic socialism.

The extent of applying the Party's theory on this matter to the social relations between the rank and file and their elected and non-elected representatives in the National Office has left something to be desired.

Reading *The Socialist Labor Party 1876-1991. A Short History* leads one to the conclusion that workers of a revolutionary syndicalist persuasion are as capable of producing organizational party structures controlled by petty bureaucrats as Leninists and Socialists have been. Valiant attempts to approach the N.O. in a critical spirit have been met time and again with expulsion and virtual excommunication from the Party. Democratic organizations must be consciously controlled from the bottom up, with unlimited lateral and vertical com-

munication, if they are to be free of bureaucratic distortions. At the same time, the critical voices of minorities must always be allowed to make their cases. While the majority rules in a democracy (usually by electing representative bodies), neither it nor its representatives should ever be considered infallible. Workers who have not learned this lesson of history (related quite well in this slim volume) are condemned to remain on the authoritarian merry-go-round.

by Mike Ballard

The following resolutions were adopted by the 1991 IWW General Assembly:

1. "The 1991 IWW General Assembly re-affirms the IWW's opposition to all forms of human oppression, including but not necessarily limited to those based on race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, creed, age, physical ability or sexual orientation.

2. "While the IWW gives its full support to international cooperation between workers, the IWW declares its opposition to the Free Trade Agreements between the governments of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. These agreements have highlighted the inequalities that exist among workers internationally, and therefore we find that our best response is to organize workers internationally. We support direct action taken by workers in opposition to these agreements."

3. "On the occasion of the Columbus Day Quincentennial, we endorse the sovereignty of all indigenous peoples and are in solidarity with groups opposing 500 years of Euro-centric colonialism."

4. "In addition to the exploitation of labor, industrial society creates wealth by exploiting the earth and non-human species. Just as the capitalists value the working class only for their labor, so they value the earth and non-human species only for their economic usefulness to humans. This has created such an imbalance that the life support systems of the earth are on the verge of collapse. The working class bears the brunt of this degradation by being forced to produce, consume, and live in the toxic environment created by this abuse. Human society must recognize that all beings have a right to exist for their own sake, and that humans must learn to live in balance with the rest of nature. This will only be accomplished when the working class takes control of human production and redirects it to the long-term benefit of all rather than the short-term profit of a few."

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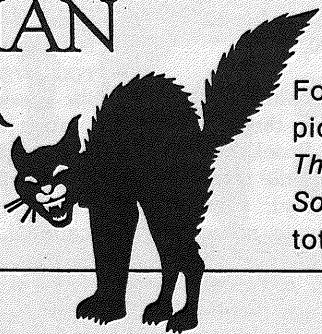
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We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

Join the IWW

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Book Reviews

Education for Struggle: The American Labor Colleges of the 1920s and 1930s, by Richard Altenbaugh. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Despite its title, this book is almost exclusively devoted to studying three efforts at workers' education: Brookwood College (closely tied to the needle trades unions and the Socialist Party), Commonwealth College (a left-wing school based in northwest Arkansas), and the IWW's own Work People's College (originally a Finnish-language school based near Duluth, Minnesota). It also touches briefly on the larger context of workers' education efforts, the American Federation of Labor's campaign to bring these under its control (AFL bureaucrats correctly feared that labor college graduates would oppose their conservative policies), and on the eventual absorption of the workers' education movement into adult education and extension programs operated by several state colleges under the supervision of union and business leaders.

Brookwood College—founded in 1921 and closed in 1937 after the AFL unions withdrew their support—is the best known of the labor colleges, and was also the most lavishly financed. Commonwealth College—founded in Louisiana in 1923 and moved to Arkansas in 1925—was based on the Brookwood model, though it was largely self-financed by the long hours of labor put in by its students and staff, first to build the college's facilities and later to grow and harvest the food needed to feed students, staff and faculty and to help cover operating expenses. Commonwealth closed in 1940, following several financial and organizational crises (in large part brought on by squabbling between Socialist and Communist party members involved in its operations) and a criminal anarchy conviction for allegedly advocating overthrow of the U.S. government, not flying an American flag and displaying the hammer and sickle (embedded in concrete at the base of the college's water tower).

The labor colleges were not colleges as we understand the term today were not colleges. Rather, they encompassed efforts ranging from evening programs in public speaking, English, political economy, labor history and similar subjects to anyone caring to attend—to residential institutions (such as the three to which the book is largely devoted) offering educational programs intended to prepare labor activists to fight more effectively for workers' interests.

Work People's College also operated summer educational programs for children and published educational materials for use at the college and elsewhere. More than 130 Finnish-American teenagers participated in the 1929 summer program, for example, studying radical literature, labor history, economics, the Finnish language, parliamentary procedure, and public speaking.

Although Altenbaugh consistently denigrates its activities, Work People's College was clearly the most successful of the schools he discusses. Work People's College was organized in 1903 as a church-affiliated folk high school, but soon came under the control of the burgeoning Finnish socialist movement at the behest of its students and stockholders. (WPC was organized as a joint-stock cooperative, with shares sold to supporters to raise the funds necessary to build and equip the college.)

When the Socialist Party began expelling syndicalists in 1913 (for a time it expelled members merely for subscribing to the IWW's Finnish-language daily newspaper) Work People's College allied itself with the Wobblies. Enrollment never returned to the pre-split levels, but the college still survived as a year-round institution until 1941, and maintained summer programs for a few years longer. The WPC campus was sold in 1953, and the college's remaining funds were distributed ten years later.

Altenbaugh's treatment of Work People's College is the most substantive available in English. It brings together a wealth of information, only some of

which is readily available elsewhere, drawn from interviews and correspondence with Fred Thompson, who taught at WPC for several years; the large and growing historical research on the Finnish socialist movement; articles on Work People's College published in *Pedagogica Historica* (1978), Rolland Paulston's *Other Dreams, Other Schools* (1979), Michael Karni's *For the Common Good* (1977), *International Socialist Review* (August 1913), *North Country Anvil* (July-August 1976), and the IWW's *Industrial Pioneer* (Oct. 1923, Nov. 1924, Feb. 1925, Oct. 1925) and *One Big Union Monthly* (Sept., 1937, April 1938); and records at the University of Minnesota's Immigration History Research Center Minnesota Historical Society, and IWW archives at Wayne State University.

Yet despite this wealth of information, the book is marred by Altenbaugh's frequent, and often bizarre, attacks against the IWW. He finds it "curious" that the IWW should devote an entire issue of its *One Big Union Monthly* to an IWW college, and protest the editor's "oppressively dogmatic statement [that] The labor movement of America needs more such schools as Work People's College where workers learn how to become better fighters in the class war." (pp. 121-22) Just why this is "oppressively dogmatic" is nowhere explained, though Altenbaugh frequently seems uncomfortable with the notion that unions might operate educational institutions for particular purposes—such as more effectively fighting the class war.

Elsewhere, Altenbaugh argues that Work People's College "finally fell victim to sectarianism" (and also to the growing acculturation of its largely Finnish constituency). "Work People's College declined," we are told, "because it isolated itself from contemporary radicalism, the New Deal, and its ethnic base. Its unswerving loyalty to the IWW" isolated it from the Socialist, Communist, and Democratic parties, to whose glorious leadership our comrades should have subjected themselves. (pp. 244-45)

Yet Work People's College was the longest-lived of the labor colleges, and the only one to rely on its own resources (rather than on contributions from sympathetic liberals, political parties and

business union bureaucrats). One former student, who went on to work in the Finnish cooperative movement, recalls his education in the workings of the economic system: "It was no accident that many students...became activists and leaders in union, cooperative, and local civic affairs." Thousands of graduates served as organizers, speakers, and newspaper reporters and editors, and Work People's College students remain active in Finnish socialist societies to this very day. (p. 252)

Altenbaugh describes his book as "a history of a modest but profound and ambitious attempt by ordinary working people to conceive and support their own educational institutions." (p. 3)

If you can get past the Introduction (discussing educational hegemony, war-of-position strategy, organic intellectuals, deliberative human agency, and the schools' counter-hegemonic role), the book is surprisingly readable.

Altenbaugh documents an era where workers were not content to leave the education of themselves and their children (the latter a subject deserving much more thorough attention) to the bosses and their government. The labor colleges helped to train a generation of labor activists who played a major role in rebuilding the labor movement in the 1930s (though, regrettably, largely on business union lines). And they helped to keep ideas alive during the very difficult years of the 1920s—a decade in which workers saw their wages and working conditions decimated, their organizations crushed by repression, and their movements racked by efforts by political parties to subject the labor movement to their leadership.

Today labor education is largely conducted under the auspices of state universities, and the same programs often graduate personnel managers and union bureaucrats (rank-and-file activists only rarely enroll). Perhaps this has something to do with the sorry state our movement finds itself in today.

—reviewed by Jon Bekken

The Socialist Labor Party 1876-1991. A Short History, by Frank Girard and Ben Perry. Livra Books, 422 W. Upsal St., Philadelphia, PA 19119. (\$8.00 postpaid)

What did Albert Parsons, Armand Hammer, Jack London, Daniel DeLeon, and James Connolly have in common?

Which party's presidential candidate drowned while attempting to save a young boy from a raging Oregon river in the 1920s?

Which party is the second oldest socialist party in the world?

If you answered the Socialist Labor Party of America (SLP), it may have been because you have already read the book which Frank Girard and Ben Perry have just written. These working class authors have collaborated to write a 112-page history of this 115-year-old party.

Both Perry and Girard have had personal experience with the SLP, having been members for some time—Perry for 15 years, resigning in 1968 and Girard for 34 years, after which he was expelled for his efforts at the Party's 1981 Convention. As such, it might be thought that these two would be too prejudiced in their opinions to write a useful history

of the SLP. This is fortunately not the case and while the book is by no means a comprehensive treatment of the SLP's history, it is a well written and concise portrait of its main subject. In addition, the book is chock full of interesting anecdotes and asides illuminating the path that some class conscious workers took out of the 19th and into the 20th century.

The first socialist party in the world was organized at Gotha in 1875, as the Social Democratic Party of Germany. The second came about in the wake of a similarly constituted Lassalleian/Marxian Unity Congress, this one meeting in Philadelphia in July, 1876. What emerged from the Philadelphia Congress was the Workingmen's Party of the United States (WPUS). By the time the summer of 1877 had rolled around, WPUS members like Albert Parsons, Phillip Van Patten, and George Schilling were addressing meetings of thousands of workers at solidarity rallies in support of the "Great Railroad Strike." In St. Louis, sympathy strikes were actively encouraged by the influential WPUS and led to a general strike that cut off all services and halted the movement of goods. For five days

the headquarters of the WPUS replaced City Hall as the center of government. From it an "Executive Committee" set up by the party issued permits to move and distribute food and other necessities. This hiatus in capitalist control of the city came to be called the "St. Louis Commune." At its first convention seven months later, the WPUS was renamed the Socialistic Labor Party by its members.

Unlike its German predecessor, the SLP has continued to advocate the abolition of the wages system and the political state. Since at least 1905, it has called for social ownership of the means of production, under the direction of a democratic government based on industrial unions, while at the same time doggedly shunning efforts to reform the capitalist system. For the SLP, reforms have been traditionally viewed as mere concealed measures of reaction, in that they have tended to divert the potentially class conscious from the road to social revolution. In short, it is and has been politically, a revolutionary syndicalist party and has therefore never recognized that any state called or calling itself socialist was or is the "real

McCoy."

Relations of the SLP, both within and without the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), are treated as extensively as other important milestones in the Party's existence. Members of the SLP, and its union affiliate of the time, the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance, were active in the founding of the IWW in 1905. Most of these workers left the IWW in 1908 when the clause calling for the formation of a political party was deleted from the IWW Preamble. Still, the SLP continued to adhere to and push the idea of revolutionary unionism, albeit via its own chosen route—the ballot—eschewing direct action, as advocated by the IWW, characterizing it as infantile, anarchistic, and dangerously self-defeating. As the ballot tactic grew progressively into a fixed idea, any emphasis on actually organizing unions took a back seat, eventually to be lost in an exhaustive cloud of ballot struggles.

The story of the SLP's spats, along with its attempts at unity, with the Socialist Party are reported in this history, as well as its relations with the

cont'd p. 6

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